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seems to have been among the most lovable and the most loved of men.

S. L. WARE.

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PRIMITIVE SOCIETY. By Robert H. Lowie. New York: Boni and Liveright. 1920. Pp. 463, including 22 pages of Bibliography and Index.

Truth is supremely elusive, but this book at least blazes the way back through a confused maze to a good starting-point and is thus an excellent, although by no means the final, introduction to the study of social origins. The writer steers clear of excessive generalizations and, to continue the voyage and change the metaphor, points out the wrecks of earlier hardier explorers in these troubled waters. From the viewpoint of common-sense he surveys facts and theories and finds the relations presumed to exist between them far to seek. The book teaches us, and rightly, to distrust sociological theory.

And yet—is it possible for a man to write a book without putting forward one or more theories, even though under camouflage? If the results of an investigation are negative, that at least calls for a generalization of some sort, be it but a proverb or an epigram. If a writer stops after clearing the ground for his new and airy structure, who is not disappointed? It is to be noted that the book first denies that the family is later than the sib or that matriarchy necessarily preceded patriarchy; second, makes a definite inquiry into the origin or the institution of property; third, declares that the State may arise from any one of a rather complex system of intersecting groupings of individuals; and, fourth, holds that social and material progress do not run parallel and are not to be explained by any common causative factor, but depend on chance contact for the cross-fertilization of culture essential to advances in civilization.

Many sociological works are now being published. They are, however, very much alike, rather hazy and spread thin over many pages. A book like this is a welcome intermission. Such work as Dr. Lowie is doing will certainly help the science to find itself.